

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 OMB-01 EB-07

COME-00 TRSE-00 /031 W

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O 141732Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9260

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AF FOR DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY MULCAHY

AID FOR WILSON AND SER/ENG

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, NI, US, EAID

SUBJECT: FMG REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY WAREHOUSING ASSISTANCE
AT LAGOS AIRPORT

REF: STATE 25956; LAGOS 11081 (DECEMBER 4, 1974)

SUMMARY: HIGHEST LEVEL FMG OFFICIAL HAS REQUESTED USG ASSISTANCE
IN SECURING, ON FULLY REIMBURSABLE BASIS, EMERGENCY WAREHOUSE
FACILITIES AT IKEJA AIRPORT. WAREHOUSING IS DESIRED IN PLACE
BY MAY 26. IF IT IS TECHNICALLY FEASIBLE TO MEET THIS REQUEST,
EMBASSY SEES THIS AS HOPED-FOR OPPORTUNITY, AFTER SERIES OF
IRRITANTS IN U.S./NIGERIAN RELATIONS, TO MAKE STRIKING, POSITIVE
GESTURE TOWARD FMG. WE STRONGLY URGE DESIRABILITY OF BEING AS
RESPONSIVE AS PHYSICALLY POSSIBLE. END SUMMARY

1. ALLISON AYIDA, FORMER PERMSEC MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND
NEWLY APPOINTED SECRETARY TO FMG, MET GENERAL GOWON AT IKEJA
MAY 14 ON HIS RETURN FROM COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE AND
CARIBBEAN STATE VISITS. GOWON AND AYIDA INSPECTED GOODS
STORAGE AT AIRPORT AND DETERMINED EMERGENCY ACTION WAS
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NECESSARY TO PROVIDE SHELTER FOR LARGE QUANTITIES AIRFREIGHT

CURRENTLY PILED AT EDGE OF FIELD WITHOUT SHELTER. HEAD OF STATE SAID HE WANTED FACILITIES IN PLACE BY MAY 26, WHEN HEADS OF OTHER WESTERN AFRICAN COUNTRIES WILL BE COMING INTO LAGOS FOR ECOWAS MEETING.

2. AYIDA APPROACHED AID DIRECTOR SAME DAY WITH REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE LIKE THAT UNDER R&R PROGRAM WHEN MISSION FLEW IN AND HELPED ERECT INFLATABLE WAREHOUSE FACILITIES. AYIDA MADE CLEAR FMG WILLING PAY ALL COSTS OF SUPPLY, AIRFREIGHT AND TECHNICIANS TO SUPERVISE ASSEMBLY OF TEMPORARY WAREHOUSE FACILITIES BY MAY 26. AYIDA MENTIONED POSSIBLE USE OF C-130 OR OTHER USG AIRCRAFT.

3. COMMENT: AS FMG WILL COVER ALL EXPENSES, PRINCIPAL CONSIDERATIONS APPEAR TO BE (A) FEASIBILITY AND (B) DESIRABILITY OF USG RESPONSIVENESS.

(A) EMBASSY UNABLE ASSESS FEASIBILITY FROM HERE. REFTELS PRODUCED DISCOURAGING RESPONSE ON AVAILABILITY OF GEODESIC DOMES AND OTHER TEMPORARY STORAGE FACILITIES IN FEBRUARY, BUT THIS MAY HAVE BEEN BECAUSE QUESTION WAS RAISED IN CONTEXT OF GRANT AID TO FMG AND SEARCH MAY HAVE CONCENTRATED ON USED EQUIPMENT. IN VIEW FMG READINESS TO PURCHASE WHATEVER IS REQUIRED, URGE WASHINGTON INVESTIGATE ANY/ALL SOURCES OF TEMPORARY WAREHOUSING OR GEODESIC, INFLATABLE, TENT OR OTHER VARIETY. SUGGEST INQUIRY RE PORTOMOD MANUFACTURED BY SEAMAN INTERNATIONAL, INC., 2028 EAST WHITFIELD AVENUE, SARASOTA, FLORIDA 33580.

(B) RE DESIRABILITY, EMBASSY BELIEVES QUICK, POSITIVE RESPONSE WOULD BE STRONGLY IN USG INTEREST. AFTER SERIES OF MINOR IRRITANTS THAT HAVE PLAGUED U.S./NIGERIAN RELATIONS DURING PAST YEAR OR TWO, PRESENT REQUEST OFFERS OPPORTUNITY FOR UP-BEAT, COOPERATIVE REACTION THAT WILL PROVIDE VISIBLE EVIDENCE OF U.S. GOODWILL, COUNTERING NIGERIAN CHARGES OF U.S. "INDIFFERENCE", THAT WILL HELP CLEAR UP FREIGHT STORAGE PROBLEM THAT IS ACUTELY EMBARRASSING TO FMG, AND THAT WILL DEMONSTRATE U.S. TECHNICAL CAPABILITY, EARNING U.S. FAVORABLE COMMERCIAL AS WELL AS POLITICAL PUBLICITY. IN SUM, WE BELIEVE IF PROJECT IS TECHNICALLY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FEASIBLE, ALL POLITICAL AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS MAKE IT MOST DESIRABLE TO BE AS RESPONSIVE AS POSSIBLE. EVEN IF TEMPORARY STORAGE WERE NOT COMPLETELY ERECTED BY MAY 26, WE BELIEVE VISIBLE EVIDENCE OF U.S. WAREHOUSING FACILITIES GOING UP AT IKEJA WOULD STILL PRODUCE SUBSTANTIAL POSITIVE IMPRESSION.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: PLEASE EXPLORE ALL POSSIBILITIES ON

URGENT BASIS AND ADVISE AVAILABILITY LARGEST SIZES OF WARE-
HOUSING IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE, TOGETHER WITH COSTS AND
FEASIBILITY OF MEETING MAY 26 TARGET.
CROSBY

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